

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Submitted with this Amendment is a Declaration Under 37 CFR §1.132 of one of the inventors Naoki Tanaka made February 20, 2007. Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 1-7 and 9 will be active in the application subsequent to entry of this Amendment.

In order to advance examination and make the claims more precise, the subject matter of claim 8 has been incorporated into claims 1 and 2. The thus-amended claims 1 and 2 specify that the substrate film (A) “is an acrylic resin film or polyethylene terephthalate film which is surface-coated with a crosslinking acrylic resin containing an anti-weathering agent.”

Owing to the presence of the anti-weathering-agent-containing crosslinking acrylic resin which is surface-coated on an acrylic resin (e.g., PMMA) film or a polyethylene terephthalate (PET) film, the amended claims 1 and 2 satisfy various parameters of the substrate film (A) recited in these claims, that is, the substrate film (A) has a total light transmittance of 85 % or more, a haze of 5 % or less and a yellow index (YI) of 10 or less after a 3,000 hours (claim 1) or 1,000 hours (claim 2) accelerated weather resistance test and a haze change of 1 % or less after film surface is wetted with MIBK.

The Official Action includes two rejections, the first of alleged anticipation directed to claims 1, 2, 8 and 9 and the second of alleged “obviousness” directed to the remaining claims, that is claims 3-7. Both of these rejections are traversed. The crux of the examiner’s position with respect to the primary reference appears to be presented in item 6 of the Official Action, a response to applicants’ previous arguments. Applicants have carefully studied the examiner’s comments and provide the following observations and attached evidence in response to them.

In the Office Action, page 5, item 6, third paragraph, the Examiner states that “Applicant’s contention that PMMA may be soluble in a form of ketone such as acetone may be correct. However, Applicant’s claims 1 and 2 submit that the specific ketone is methyl isobutyl ketone (MIBK), which is not acetone.” The Examiner further states that “Applicant has not submitted objective evidence with regard to the effect of MIBK on PMMA”.

In response to the examiner’s comments and invitation, applicants submit the Declaration of Naoki Tanaka, one of the inventors, made February 20, 2007, that describes results of an experiment on the solubility in MIBK of (a) PMMA used as a substrate in Example 1 of the cited

February 27, 2007

WO'523 and (b) the crosslinking acrylic resin which is surface-coated on an acrylic resin (e.g., PMMA) film or polyethylene terephthalate (PET) film in the amended claims 1 and 2.

As is clear from the inventor's Declaration, PMMA (a) in WO'523 is easily soluble in MIBK while the crosslinking acrylic resin (b) in the amended claims 1 and 2 is hardly soluble in MIBK.

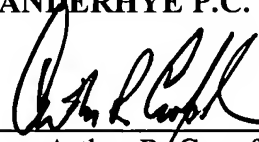
It is therefore clear that the PMMA substrate used in WO'523 is entirely different from the crosslinking-acrylic-resin-coated acrylic resin (e.g., PMMA) film or polyethylene terephthalate (PET) film as defined in the amended claims 1 and 2. That is, the amended claims 1 and 2 use, as a substrate film, a PMMA film surface-coated with a crosslinking acrylic resin instead of using a PMMA film per se and accomplish the above-stated parameters. Because of this, the amended claims 1 and 2 are remarkably different from WO'523 that uses PMMA per se as a substrate.

For the above reasons it is respectfully submitted that the claims of this application define inventive subject matter. Reconsideration and allowance are solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: _____



Arthur R. Crawford
Reg. No. 25,327

ARC:eaw
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100